September 3-4, 2008

Federal Regulations Task Force
Agenda
Country Inn & Suites
5353 North 27^{th} Street
Lincoln Nebraska

Wednesday, September 3, 2008

1.	Introduction of Debra Jenkins, Office Director, Lincoln	Frank
	Introduction of Kristi Berst, Youth Leadership Council Facilitator	Jack
	Introduction of Leslie Novacek, Assistive Technology Partnership Director	Mark
	Introduction of Kim Simmons, Office Director, North Platte	Frank

2.	Transition Training Video for new Staff (35 CFR 361.22)	Jack, Kelli

Jack and Kelli have developed a video to be used with new transition and all new staff. Each team will receive a copy of the DVD and it will also be posted on VRIS.

3.	IT Update	Dan
	Authentication Discussion	Tim

Xerox printer issues with Leopard are being resolved. Xerox has a new printer driver for the Xerox 4500 printer and the Data Center is deploying these new printer drivers to the printers that the offices already have.

Eval laptops are being upgraded with a Windows emulation software, Fusion will work better with some of the eval software.

Working with Governor's Chief Information Officer's office (CIO) on access to state government web sites and services. The CIO is encouraging all new web applications to use their services. This means that QUEST II would work like NIS, available via the web. The CIO also has a mandate from the governor that all agencies change their e-mail addresses to 'nebraska.gov' and possibly use the State's e-mail server instead of our own.

Current CIO software would not be able to restrict the use of web based services to VR computers, future software updates could offer this possibility but not at this time. CIO software does not allow for the one password to log into several programs that we now have with Leopard. Currently there is no e-mail client for the State's e-mail program, which would mean using webmail.

Issues that need further exploration: use of QUEST II via the web, protection of QUEST data via the web, caching of data when using the web on computers other than VR's, whether we will use the state's e-mail servers, data encryption of sensitive data (SSN's, DOB's, etc.).

Mark has worked with the CIO offices when he was with ATP and he will be working with them to sort through the questions and issues that will need to be decided.

4.	Administrative Memorandum #502—Work hours	Margy
	• #502 Appendix A Work Schedule Form	

There is a form to be used for employee work hours and must be used each time a new employee is hired as well as if a current employee changes their hours. We have to have one done by each employee. The form says a leadership council member must sign and Margy & Frank have designated that the Area Administrator can be the final approver in the field. All of Leadership must fill one out and send to Frank and Margy.

The auditors are looking at all the policies the Department and VR have and if we have a policy the auditors will want to see documentation that we are following it. The work hours are an example of this. The Department has a policy regarding work hours and this form is a requirement.

5. VRIS — Sarah, Sheri N

Sarah and Sheri demonstrated the new VRIS and how to access the data that is available there.

6. CAP Report (34 CFR 361.24) — Vicki

Post Secondary: when working with consumers with plenty of time before school begins VR still needs to inform the consumer of the 60-day requirement. Need to document when we inform the consumer of our policies. Consumers where we see problems and not sure we're going to agree to post secondary waiting to use the 60 day requirement as a reason not to fund is not appropriate.

Application for Services: Consumers have contacted her saying they want to apply for services and VR is telling them that they need to do volunteer work or a job for 6 months and then come back to VR when they have completed that. She understands about consumers who have been consumers multiple times and if nothing has changed why do they believe they will be successful this time. She isn't seeing this with any specific disability group.

7. State Cars — Margy

Each office must develop a policy on using state cars and personal cars and they must follow it. The auditors looked at the personal mileage costs of the Department in the past year and the costs have gone up considerably. Not suggesting that travel be curtailed but to be mindful of carpooling and consolidating trips when necessary. In addition it used to be if traveling 100 miles it was more cost efficient to use your personal car but that is no longer the case. It is now cheaper to use the state cars.

8. Merit-Based Scholarships (3 CFR 361.54) — Pat
   • Response from Office of General Counsel

Federal regs say that comparable benefits do not consider merit-based aid. Our student financial aid form separates out merit based aid. We will be revising the Student Financial Aid report so that merit based aid will no longer be separated out.

9. Update on Lincoln Office Move — Mark, Roger
   Update on Kearney Office Move — Mark, Judy

Lincoln office move: the location chosen is the old Payless Building on North 27th. Center for the People in Need is already a tenant. We (VR and ATP) would have the whole front section. Mark and Roger are meeting with the architect to go over changes to the building. Plans will be finalized by end of October, moving in sometime in 2009, hopefully around February. There will be a large conference room where Leadership meetings will be held as well as SRC meetings. There are hotels and restaurants very close. It will be an open design, cubicles, counseling rooms, eval area, on the bus line, have current technology for meetings and training.

Kearney office move: recommended the Heritage Bank Plaza, 315 West 60th. It was formerly a call center, there is already a break room, kitchen, and common bathrooms that we won't have to build into the space which will allow more flexibility for the design we come up with. Plan to be moved into this location in February 2009. This office will also have an open design, cubicles with counseling rooms and meeting rooms.

10. Update on Case Reviews (34 CFR 361.47) Janet

There are two more teams for case reviews on terminations. The teams could bring an emerging leader to the reviews and those staff felt it was very beneficial to participate in the review. The teams were invited to participate at the end of review day and for some teams those phone conversations went well and some teams felt a bit picked on. Providing feedback to the teams immediately is beneficial. The summary that is sent is also very helpful. The more staff from the teams that can participate the AA/OD's felt was very important.

Next year reviews will be on post secondary cases, current cases as well as consumers who dropped out, and possibly successful post secondary cases. AA/OD's can bring whomever and however many staff they want.

11. Procurement Tracey, Gil, Cathy

- What issues are you having with procurement process?

The issues State Office has seen are the task notes the accounting staff send in for cash advances. Examples of non-acceptable task documentation notes; the consumer called and needed gas, agreed to purchase clothing. Acceptable examples: for gas, purpose of the gas, number of miles times the number of days; clothing, purpose of the clothing, what clothing is being purchased, how the cost for the clothing was determined.

A suggestion, the requirements for authorization details more specifically the cost, the formula for achieving the cost (especially for gas). For reimbursement you need the consumer reimbursement form and receipts.

Cathy indicated the state auditors are pulling more documents each month to audit and the auditors are not picking on any one person or office. Examples for this month the auditors are looking at travel, personnel mileage. For example, if an expense document indicates a trip to a specific school they want the address for the school to confirm the miles traveled and then want supporting documentation regarding why they were at the school, like an agenda. For meetings with consumers at school or other locations there won't be agendas but we can send a copy of their meeting maker calendar. This is another reason that the meeting maker calendar needs to be accurate.

12. Ergonomics Assessments/Worksite Accommodations Margy

Worksite accommodations, first step the request must go to HR. There is a form to be used when requesting an ergonomics assessment or an accommodation review. A copy of the form must be faxed to King; not for approval but for state office knowledge and if it involves purchasing of furniture we are involved.

For equipment requests they must come to state office. If an equipment request turns into an accommodation then a referral must be sent to HR as soon as it was identified as disability accommodation.

13. New Staff Training Committee Exit Strategy (34 CFR 361.18) Larry

Currently the committee meets regularly and feel that the training process and tools have been identified and are posted on VRIS. They propose that the committee only meet twice a year. As additional items come up that need to be addressed regarding training send the information or request to Larry, Melanee and Pat.

14. Update on Customer Satisfaction Survey (34 CFR 361 Frank
- Orientation Bernie

Sometimes consumers can't get into the surveys because the surveys won't open. Frank wasn't aware that this was a problem, asked when that happens to call him. AA/OD's should be able to print their results for each month.

Frank distributed statewide response totals for each of the surveys. The surveys are under utilized and ask that that each consumer who comes in the office be offered the opportunity to complete the survey on the computer. The paper survey should not be used with consumers when they meet with them in the office.

Frank distributed some draft examples of surveys that can be used for staff that meet with consumers outside of the office. The paper survey will include a self addressed stamped envelope that will be mailed to State office. Someone in the State Office will enter the information in the electronic survey system. The paper survey has a place to identify the staff person they met with. Staff can write their name on the survey before they give it to the consumer so the consumer doesn't have to remember whom they met with.

The SRC asked Frank to have something added to the VR Orientation about the surveys. Bernie distributed a draft of that change.

15. Placement Conference Jim

Next week is the conference with hospital staff. There are approximately 12 hospital staff planning to attend and about 60 VR staff.

Jim distributed plaques for employer recognition during October. Placement staff recommended employers and the SRC was involved in selecting the employers. The plaques are from the SRC. Jim has worked with the Chambers in each location an employer is located and all have agreed to do a presentation except for Columbus and Omaha.

16. How are VRIS Updates Reviewed in Field Offices? Frank

AA's and OD's indicated that they are reviewed in the team meetings.

17. Presentation of Goal Activity that is Most Unique for Your Team Office Directors
- each office director is to present one goal activity that is most unique

Frank asked that each idea presented be written up in two sentences and sent to him.

Melanee Petersen – Enhancing referrals from the medical community. Working with PT's, OT's. Each month one of the associates contacts the places where they have left brochures, business cards to see if they need restocking. Now the consumers referred by the medical community have a different colored file folder which visually identifies them with staff.

Debra Jenkins – Went on a tour of Center for People in Need and saw all the things they do and thought maybe an assessment site could be developed. September will be a trial month as an assessment site in janitorial with the plan that this site could develop into three different work assessment sites.

Roger Glawatz – Transition scholarship with CVS pharmacy. Involved putting a graduate into a 200-hour program in the summer in an assessment/training position as a pharmacy assistant attendant. If the training works out okay they would be eligible to be trained as a pharmacy tech. Pharmacy techs make $40,000 to $50,000 per year.

Sharon Koeppe – developed a tracking system to increase their successful outcomes and unsuccessful terminations. Tracking when consumers move into Employment Follow up and talking about their progress each month at team meetings. The team also developed their own goals for the year and each individual team member has a goal.

Jon Rathjen – Develop a system to track the goals of consumers in employment services milestone so entire team can help with job leads. In addition they have arranged monthly employer tours to get more specific knowledge about job requirements.

Terry Wegner – incorporating Strength Finders into their team assignments. Each summer Terry and Judy interview each staff person to reconcile the state and federal goals with what staff are doing each day. Before the interview they send each staff person a copy of their critical skills checklist, a copy of the federal goals for them to think about and to they think their specific job duties.

Arvin Frazier – partnering with North Omaha Development project, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Mutual of Omaha to train and place up to 50 north Omaha residents in call centers in north Omaha. 5 month training period at Metro. Salary range $25,000-$40,000. This is available to the north Omaha enterprise zones and their teams have developed a goal of getting five consumers into this program.

Kim Simmons – Boys and Girls Club and Wal-mart have donated personal hygiene products and can use the bags that Melanee showed.

Bernie Craven – Their team works with both the Omaha and Winnebago tribes. They are developing a partnership with the Tribal Council in conjunction with the development of consumer driven transportation system. This system will support the development of OJT's for consumers and initial employment for consumers. The individual they hire to be the transportation driver will be a VR consumer and member of the tribe. Once they have a transportation system in place it will create transportation options for consumers on the reservation in getting to and from work. The tribes are now more interested in pursuing this and have looked at additional grants they could apply for.

Deb Dixon – developing additional referral sources and some outreach plans. Don helped develop their team develop this plan. They are monitoring where the referrals are coming from and how successful they are. Co-locating with agencies with which we have mutual goals, developing referral sources in Sarpy and Cass counties. Helping staff get used to going out to locations when they were used to referrals coming in the front door.

Larry Niemeyer- Apogee retailers represent retailers of toys, clothing, and other items. It is very similar to Goodwill. They have located a call center in Columbus. Employees make outbound calls for charities to make pickups of donations. Their preference is to hire employees who have a disability. A staff person will be there every other week.

Judy – marketing effort staff identified a marketing plan, one day they all went out and marketed to employers in a blitz day. Increased referrals by 100% in two months (#6).

18. Update on Behavioral Health (34 CFR 361.24) Frank

19. Children's Behavioral Health Services (34 CFR 361.24) Judy

Provided update on the contracts we have with Behavioral health (18 & 19)

20. Production (34 CFR 361.56) Frank, Margy

- Each team reported their progress on:
  - meeting goals
  - Standards and Indicators

21. Team Tour Frank, Margy

What should Frank and Margy talk about in October when meeting with the teams?

- Use of the surveys
- What's happening federally
- The auditor and why they are asking for additional information from staff
- Update on the search for a new commissioner
- Talk about new director of ATP, Leslie Novacek
- Emerging leaders

22. Emerging leaders Frank

Staff self-selected to become part of this group. It doesn't meant that you want to be an office director/AA/program director as there are many opportunities for leadership on the team. At the meeting that was held it gave everyone an opportunity to find out what is meant by being a leader. The strengths finder training was offered to them first.

Are we utilizing the emerging leaders when leadership opportunities come up on the team? Some staff indicated they weren't interested in being an emerging leader since they didn't want to be an office director or AA, confusing leadership and management.

Are we going to make this opportunity available to new staff that has been hired since the original group was identified? No decision made.